

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 NEAE-00 /095 W  
-----088141 291306Z /11

P R 291040Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8474  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 3600

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, LE  
SUBJ: TURBULENCE IN THE MARONITE CAMP

1. SUMMARY. PAKRADOUNI SAYS THAT DEEP-SEATED DISGUST WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF TONY FRANJIYAH, HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER CONTINUES AMONG THE MARONITES GENERALLY, AND IN THE PHALANGE POLITICAL BUREAU IN PARTICULAR. NEVERTHELESS, THE GEMAYELS CONTINUE COMPLETELY IN CHARGE. BACHIR GEMAYEL IS MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO SELL HIS VERSION OF WHAT HAPPENED, MAKING A SCAPEGOAT OF "UNCONTROLLED" PHALANGISTS FROM BECHARRE. DANY CHAMOUN, LIKE AMIN GEMAYEL, IS DISGUSTED BY THE WHOLE AFFAIR, BUT SEEMS DETERMINED TO STICK CLOSE TO BACHIR. SULEIMAN FRANJIYAH'S REVENGE WILL TAKE THE FORM FIRST OF AN EFFORT TO GATHER TOGETHER THE CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM POLITICAL FORCES OF THE NORTH, FOLLOWED BY MILITARY ACTION. FOR HIMSELF PAKRADOUNI SAYS HE IS GOING TO STAY IN THE PARTY AND AVOID ACTIONS HOSTILE TO THE GEMAYELS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME DIS-  
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TANCING HIMSELF FROM THE IHDIN OPERATION. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF MET WITH PHALANGE POLITICAL BUREAU MEMBER KARIM PAKRADOUNI JUNE 27. (HIS COMMENTS ON SOUTH LEBANON IN SEPTTEL.)

3. POLITICAL BUREAU DEBATES. PAKRADOUNI SAID THAT, IN ADD-

ITION TO HIMSELF, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF POLITICAL BUREAU MEMBERS FUNDAMENTALLY CRITICAL OF THE IHDIN OPERATION WHICH KILLED TONY FRANJIYAH. THEY INCLUDED THE FOUR PHALANGE DEPUTIES IN THE PARLIAMENT: GEORGE SAADE FROM BATROUN, EDMOND RIZK FROM JESSINE, LOUIS ABU CHARAF FROM THE KESRWAN, AND, ALTHOUGH HE WAS HESITANT TO ADMIT IT, AMIN GEMAYEL HIMSELF. THEY WERE, HOWEVER, POLITICAL BUREAU MEMBERS, NOT MILITIA LEADERS. THEY COULD NOT RISK ANY KIND OF A CONFRONTATION WITH BACHIR.

4. GLEICHSCHALTUNG. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE HAD RECEIVED TWO VISITS FROM EMISSARIES OF BACHIR. ALFRED MADY HAD SPOKEN FAIRLY REASONABLY, IN FAVOR OF THE NECESSITY OF THE IHDIN OPERATION. HOWEVER, FOUAD ROUKOUZ (WHOM PAKRADOUNI HAD EARLIER IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF THE PLANNERS OF THE OPERATION) HAD CALLED ON PAKRADOUNI TO EXPLAIN THE "PARTY LINE": THE OPERATION WAS CARRIED ON BY UNCONTROLLABLE PHALANGIST ELEMENTS FROM BECHARRE, SEEKING TO AVENGE THE MURDER OF PHALANGIST LEADER JUD AL-BAYEH. PAKRADOUNI HAD TOLD RAKOUZ THAT THIS WAS ABSURD, HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE HAD SEEN (UNARMED) SKS TROOPERS MOVING NORTHWARD IN BUSES ALONG THE COASTAL ROAD FROM BEIRUT TO BATROUN (WHERE THEY PICKED UP THEIR WEAPONS). OTHERS HAD SEEN THE PHALANGIST MILITIA CONTINGENT FROM SIN EL-FIL AND FURN ES-CHEBBAK, WHICH WENT WITH ITS WEAPONS NORTHWARD THROUGH BIKFAYA AND THE MOUNTAINS. RAKOUZ HAD THEN CONCLUDED HIS PRESENTATION TO PAKRADOUNI BY POINTING OUT THAT IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, BACHIR GEMAYEL WAS "THE STRONG MAN" BOTH IN THE PHALANGE PARTY AND AMONG THE MARONITES GENERALLY. IT WOULD BE BEST TO GO ALONG. (COMMENT: WE HAVE ALSO HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES OF EFFORTS BY BACHIR HIMSELF TO CONTACT VARIOUS MARONITE POLITICAL LEADERS TO PRESENT HIS VERSION OF WHAT HAPPENED AT IHDIN. END COMMENT.)

5. DANY CHAMOUN GOING ALONG. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE HAD HAD A DISCUSSION WITH DANY CHAMOUN A FEW DAYS EARLIER. DANY WAS UPSET ABOUT THE TURN OF EVENTS, BUT ACCORDING TO PAKRADOUNI, WAS COMPLETELY UNWILLING TO HAVE A CONFRONTATION WITH BACHIR, WHICH COULD ONLY RESULT IN BLOODSHED IN WHICH THE FAR WEAKER NATIONAL LIBERAL MILITIA WOULD LOSE OUT. DANY WAS EVEN WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT PHALANGE-NLP "SKS" MILITARY POLICE, EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD BE COMPLETELY PHALANGE-DOMINATED. DANY SEEMS TO WANT OUT OF POLITICS GENERALLY. HE HAD SOUGHT TO RESIGN AS "SECRETARY FOR DEFENSE" OF THE NLP, BUT HIS FATHER HAD REFUSED. THE NLP ALSO CONTINUED TO HAVE VERY SEVERE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. DANY'S TACTIC ON THE MILITIA LEVEL WAS A VERY CLOSE PARALLEL TO THAT OF CAMILLE CHAMOUN, WHO IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS WAS STICKING FAIRLY CLOSE TO PIERRE GEMAYEL. CAMILLE CHAMOUN CONTINUES

TO ATTEND THE LEBANESE FRONT WEEKLY MEETINGS. PAKRADOUNI COMMENTED THAT THIS WAS A CLASSIC CHAMOUNIST TACTIC: WHEN THERE IS A BASIC SHIFT IN THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE, SHIFT WITH IT UNTIL IT BECOMES CLEAR HOW BEST TO PROFIT FROM THE SITUATION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 3600

6. THE FRANJIYAH STRATEGY. PAKRADOUNI THOUGHT THAT SULEIMAN FRANJIYAH WOULD FIRST MOUNT A POLITICAL ATTACK ON THE PHALANGE WHILE DEVOTING HIMSELF TO REGROUPING THE POLITICAL FORCES OF THE NORTH, TO INCLUDE BOTH THE OTHER LEADING MARONITE POLITICAL FAMILIES (THE DOUAIHYS IN PARTICULAR) AND THE SUNNI MUSLIMS OF TRIPOLI LED BY RACHID KARAME. FRANJIYAH WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, SEEK BROADER POLITICAL SUPPORT, FOR EXAMPLE FROM THE PALESTINIANS (AS HAD BEEN RUMORED IN THE PRESS). HIS WAR WOULD BE CONDUCTED FROM A UNIFIED GEOGRAPHIC BASE. AFTER HIS POLITICAL FENCES WERE MENDED, FRANJIYAH WOULD PROCEED WITH MILITARY OPERATIONS. PAKRADOUNI THOUGHT THE NORTHERNERS WOULD HAVE A FAIRLY EASY TIME IN THE NORTHERN PART OF NORTH LEBANON, AND WOULD HAVE A MILITARY VICTORY AT SHAKKA. THE SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE SHAKKA CEMENT PLANT WOULD RETURN TO FRANJIYAH CONTROL, AS BEFORE THE CIVIL WAY. FRANJIYAH WOULD THEN MOVE DOWN TO BATROUN, BUT THERE HE MIGHT ENCOUNTER THE LIMITS OF HIS ABILITY TO MAKE WAR ON THE PHALANGE. ALREADY IN THE NORTH THERE WAS A CERTAIN REGROUP-

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ING OF ALLIANCES IN THE EXPECTATION OF SUCH A SCENARIO:  
PAKRADOUNI HAD SPOKEN TO SEVERAL PHALANGISTS FROM THE "FAR NORTH" (ZGHORTA AND BECHARRE), WHO HAD SAID THEY WANTED PEACE AT WHATEVER WAS FRANJIYAH'S PRICE. ALREADY, ALL THE PHALANGE OFFICES IN THE FAR NORTH HAD BEEN CLOSED. BATROUN, HOWEVER, WAS MORE ORIENTED TOWARD CENTRAL MT. LEBANON, AND THERE THE LOCAL PHALANGISTS WOULD FIGHT FRANJIYAH.

7. PAKRADOUNI'S POSITION IN THE PARTY. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE HAD FOUND A WAY AROUND THE DEMANDS ON HIM BY THE GEMAYELS AND THE MAJORITY OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU TO GO TO SYRIA AND PATCH UP THE PHALANGE-SYRIAN CONNECTION: WHEN THE PRESSURES BECAME INEXORABLE, HE AGREED TO GO TO DAMASCUS. HE THEN SECRETLY ARRANGED WITH THE SYRIANS TO PASS THE WORD THAT HE WOULD NOT BE WELCOMED. HE WAS THUS ABLE TO MAINTAIN HIS GOOD RAPPORT WITH BOTH CAMPS, AND, AT THE SAME TIME, FURTHER ADD TO PHALANGIST TREPIDATION AT HOW THE SYRIANS MIGHT REACT TO THE FRANJIYAH ASSASSINATION. (ON THAT SCORE, PAKRADOUNI THOUGHT IT WAS SIGNIFICANT THAT RIF'AT AL-ASAD HAS APPARENTLY VISITED ZGHORTA TWICE MORE SINCE HIS INITIAL CONDOLENCE CALL -- A SIGN THAT THE SYRIANS MAY INDEED BE PLANNING TO ACTIVELY ASSIST SULEIMAN FRANJIYAH IN HIS REVENGE.) PAKRADOUNI SAID HE WAS DETERMINED TO STAKE OUT A POSITION INDEPENDENT FROM THE CURRENT TREND OF THE PARTY BUT TO AVOID AN OPEN CONFRONTATION. BACHIR AND COMPANY WOULD LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO SEE HIM RESIGN FROM THE PARTY. IN THE LONG RUN, PIERRE AND BACHIR GEMAYEL (IF NOT AMIN) WOULD PASS FROM THE PHALANGE POLITICAL SCENE AND THERE WOULD BE ROOM FOR NEW LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE PARTY. HE WOULDN'T WANT TO BE LEFT OUT. IN THE MEDIUM TERM, HOWEVER, HE HAD NO IDEA WHO MIGHT SUCCEED THE GEMAYELS IN RUNNING THE PARTY IF THEY WERE SUD- DENLY REMOVED. PAKRADOUNI SAID THAT PIERRE GEMAYEL DID NOT LIKE STRONG LEADERS AROUND HIMSELF, OTHER THAN HIS OWN SONS.  
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8. COMMENT: PAKRADOUNI CONFIRMS THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FUNDAMENTAL REALIGNMENTS TAKING PLACE WITHIN THE MARONITE CAMP, AND WITHIN THE PHALANGE-NLP REMANENT OF THE LEBANESE FRONT. THE OUTCOME AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, IS ANYBODY'S GUESS.  
PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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